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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[30Day-14-0636]

Agency Forms Undergoing Paperwork Reduction Act Review

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publishes a list of information collection requests under review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). To request a copy of these requests, call (404) 639-7570 or send an email to omb@cdc.gov. Send written comments to CDC Desk Officer, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503 or by fax to (202) 395-5806. Written comments should be received within 30 days of this notice.

Proposed Project

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Secure Public Health Emergency Response Communications Network (Epi-X) (OMB Control No. 0920-0636, exp. 5/31/2014) - Revision - Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Background and Brief Description

The effectiveness and efficiency of CDC's response to any public health incident depends on information at the agency's disposal to characterize and monitor the incident, make timely decisions, and take appropriate actions to prevent or reduce the impact of the incident.

Available information in anticipation of, during and following public health incident responses is often incomplete, is not easily validated by state and local health authorities, and is sometimes conflicting. This lack of reliable information often creates a high level of uncertainty with potential negative impacts on public health response operations. Secure communications with CDC's state, local, territorial, and tribal public health partners is essential to resolve conflicting information, validate incident status, and establish and maintain situational awareness. Reliable, secure communications are essential for the agency to gain and maintain accurate situational awareness, make informed decisions, and to respond in the most appropriate manner possible in order to minimize the impact of an incident on the public health of the United States.

This generic Information Collection Request (ICR) is being revised to: 1) remove verbiage limiting data collection to activation of the Incident Management Structure, 2) broaden

categories under which data may be collected to increase its utilization, and 3) provide clarity regarding the data elements.

Epi-X is CDC's Web-based communication system for securely communicating in immediate anticipation of, during and following public health emergencies that have multi-jurisdictional impacts and implications. The incidents of September 11, 2001 illustrated the need for an encrypted and secure communications system that would permit CDC to communicate urgently with partners at the state and local levels, and to notify them "24 hours a day, 7 days a week", when necessary. Similarly, *Epi-X* was specifically designed to provide public health decision-makers at the state and local levels a secure, reliable tool for communicating sensitive, unusual, or urgent public health incidents to neighboring jurisdictions as well as to CDC.

CDC has recognized a need to expand the use of *Epi-X* to collect specific response related information in anticipation of, during and following public health emergencies. Proposed data collection instruments under this generic ICR will be designed to ensure ready access to public health and disease epidemiology information.

Authorized officials from state and local health departments affected by the public health incident will be informed of this data collection first through an *Epi-X*

Facilitator, who will work closely with *Epi-X* program staff and the *Epi-X* Information Collection Request Liaison to ensure that *Epi-X* incident specific information collections are understood. The survey instruments will contain specific questions relevant to the current and ongoing public health incident and response activities.

Respondents will receive the survey instrument(s) as an official CDC email, which is clearly labeled, "*Epi-X* Emergency Public Health Incident Information Request." The email message will be accompanied by a link to an *Epi-X Forum* discussion web page. Respondents can provide their answers to the survey questions by posting information within the discussion.

The estimated annual burden to respondents is 24,400 hours. The total estimated burden for the generic information collection is 73,200 hours for three years.

There are no costs to respondents except their time.

Estimated Annualized Burden Hours

Type of Respondent	Form Name	No. of Respondents	No. Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response (in hours)
State Epidemiologists	<i>Epi-X</i> Emergency Public Health Incident Information Request	50	104	1
County Health Officials	<i>Epi-X</i> Emergency Public Health Incident Information Request	1,600	12	1

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